

U.S. EPA's BEACH Program



Great Lakes Beach Conference
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Agency

Overview



- ⌘ Introduction to Beach Program
- ⌘ Incorporation of Beach Act provisions
- ⌘ Other Beach Program Actions

Continuing concerns about nation's recreational waters



- ⌘ Persistent beach water quality problems – Beach closures and advisories.
- ⌘ Substantial inconsistency in monitoring approaches among and within states.
- ⌘ Inconsistent public notification programs.
- ⌘ Growing concerns about microbiological contaminants
- ⌘ Increased pollution pressures on coastal and water-based areas due to population growth and more intense land use.

EPA BEACH Program



⌘ Goal:

Significantly reduce the risk of disease to users of the nation's recreational waters through improvements in recreational water programs, communication, and scientific advances

EPA BEACH Program



⌘ Three Key Themes

- ☑ Strengthen beach programs and water quality standards
- ☑ Inform public about recreational water quality
- ☑ Conduct research to improve science for beach programs

BEACH Act -- Key Provisions



⌘ Key Provisions Are Similar

- ☑ Ensure Nationally-Consistent **Standards** for Recreational Waters
- ☑ Establish **Monitoring and Notification Measures** for Recreational Waters
- ☑ Provide Development and Implementation **Grants** to States and Local Governments.

BEACH Act -- Key Provisions



⌘ Water Quality Criteria and Standards

☑ Existing Criteria & Standards:

- ☒ State must adopt EPA's recommended water quality criteria (or "as protective as" EPA criteria) within 3 1/2 years
- ☒ If state fails to adopt, EPA shall propose regulations for revised standards

☑ Revised Criteria

- ☒ EPA shall conduct research for new indicators & propose new criteria within five years

W A T E R Q U A L I T Y C R I T E R I A

C o m p a r i s o n o f G r e a t L a k e s S t a t e s

	S T A T E				C O U N T I E S					
	E C	E N T	F C	T C	E C	E N T	F C	T C	N o n e	T o t a l .
I L			X		X (2)		X (4)			5
I N	X				X (4)					4
M I	X		X		X (1 2)		X (5)	X (1)	X (6)	2 1
M N							X (2)			2
N Y			X	X		X (1)	X (1 2)	X (1 3)	X (1)	1 6
O H	X		X		X (6)	X (1)	X (1)			6
P A			X				X (2)			2
W I			X		X (5)	X (0)	X (9)	X (1)	X (8)	2 0

BEACH Act -- Key Provisions



⌘ Grants

- ☑ Authorizes grants to states to develop monitoring and notification programs. Local governments may apply after 1 year, if state do not. Allows “development” & “implementation” grants. Authorizes \$ 30 million per year.

⌘ “Performance Criteria”

- ☑ EPA to develop performance criteria within 18 months, in collaboration with State and local governments. States must meet these criteria to receive a grant.

BEACH Act -- Key Provisions



⌘ Monitoring

- ☑ Risk-based approach with flexibility for states to target high use/high risk beaches
- ☑ EPA to develop performance criteria for monitoring beaches by state and local agencies

⌘ Notification

- ☑ EPA to develop performance criteria for public notification at beaches by state and local agencies

BEACH Act -- Additional Provisions



⌘ National EPA database

- ☑ Database of beach advisories, pollution sources, areas subject to program, other.

⌘ EPA backstop

- ☑ Monitor and notify at select beaches within a state, if not done by state or local agencies.

⌘ Jurisdiction:

- ☑ Great Lakes and marine “coastal” areas including estuaries. Not inland waters.

Beach Program--



⌘ Strengthen beach program and standards

- ☑ Stronger water quality standards

- ☑ Guidance and technology transfer

 - ☑ Program guidance documents

 - ☑ Technical conferences for state and local recreational water quality managers.

Beach Program



⌘ Inform the Public

- ☑ Annual national Beach Health Survey

- ☑ EPA's "Beach Watch" Web Site

 - ☑ Current information

 - ☑ Information submitted due to Beach Act

- ☑ Beach Mapping & GIS displays

Beach Program



⌘ Research to Improve Science

- ☑ Better and faster water quality indicators
- ☑ Modeling and monitoring research
- ☑ Exposure and Health Effects Research

For more information...



⌘ www.epa.gov/ost/beaches

⌘ *Action Plan for Beaches and Recreational Waters* EPA-600-R-98-079, March 1999.